

What is your worldview?

Or perhaps an easier question:

When you take your eyeballs out and have a good look at them, what do you see?

“A worldview may be understood as a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view our world and our place in it. This framework could be thought of as being like the frame of a house – that is not seen, but crucial to the way our reality is constructed and held together. It supports our beliefs, our actions, and our plans and hopes for the future. It gives shape to our lives and creates the space in which we live and speak, act and dream. This frame is our frame. It might be the same as some, but very different from others.

Our worldview acts as the lens through which we view the world. We might not look at the lens, but we do look through it, and it will largely determine what we see in front of us. That lens can be very different for different people, and produce vastly divergent ways of understanding reality.”

- Simon Smart's *A Spectator's Guide To World Views: Ten ways of understanding life* p 6

A thinking activity – using the speech bubble as the centre of the mind map, jot down every way of seeing the world that you can think of that might explain or make sense of a person making this decision:



Here are two sets of questions from Simon Smart's *A Spectator's Guide To World Views: Ten ways of understanding life* for you to think about and write down your answers to:

SET ONE (the suggestions given are just to prompt you to think, you might not agree with any of them and that's fine! What do YOU think?):

Reality

What is the nature of the universe and the world around us?

Is there a God or gods; is there a spiritual realm or is the universe merely made up of physical matter?

Was the world created with order and a plan, or is it chaotic and the result of blind chance?

Human Nature

What is a human being – a highly developed animal, a complex machine, a unique creation of God made in his image, a spark from an eternal flame, or a combination of ever changing physical and mental activities?

Death

What happens to people when they die? Do they return in a different form; does their soul become one with the universe; do they simply cease to exist or do they face eternal life with or without God? Is there another possibility?

Knowing

How and what can we know? How can we know anything at all? Is it because consciousness has evolved over millions of years, or because God who is relational allows us to have knowledge and consciousness as his special created beings?

Value

How do we know what is right and wrong? Is it because we are subjects of God who is good; is "right and wrong" merely human choice; is it embedded in a natural law that is true for all time and all places; or is right and wrong merely the result of actions connected to the process of survival of the fittest?

Purpose

What is the meaning of human history? Is it to participate in the purposes of God; to live full, busy and happy lives; to be in community with others; to create paradise on earth; to leave the world a better place?

SET TWO:

James Sire, in his book *Naming The Elephant – Worldview as a concept*, suggests that a person's worldview may be discovered in the answer they give to four key questions:

- i) **Who am I?** What is the nature and task of human beings?
- ii) **Where am I?** What is the nature of the world and universe that I live in? Do I see the world and universe as personal, ordered and controlled; or chaotic, cruel and random?
- iii) **What's wrong?** Why is it that my world appears to be not the way it's supposed to be? How do I make sense of evil?
- iv) **What is the solution?** Where do I find hope for something better?